

**Town of Chester
Agricultural Commission
Approved Minutes
March 28, 2017**

Attendance

Members Present

Gary Van Geyte, Chairman
Steve Boeske
Jodi Boeske
Cindy LeBlanc

Members Absent

Chuck Myette, Treasurer
Jeff Geary

Members of the Public Present at Various Times

Penny Williams, Reporter, Tri-Town Times

Call to Order

Chairman Van Geyte called the meeting of the Chester Agricultural Commission to order at 7:10 pm on Tuesday, March 28, 2017.

Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes

January 24, 2017: Mr. Boeske motioned to approve the minutes as written. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded the motion, all in favor, so moved.

Treasurer's Report (Chuck) – Tabled

Classes

Beekeeping

The Commission would like to contact Wendy to do another talk on beekeeping, at Stevens Hall in May. Mrs. Boeske suggested Saturdays were better. Chairman Van Geyte will schedule it as far out as possible without getting too close to the holiday.

Reading the Forested Landscape

The Commission would like to present Mr. Geary's talk in the fall.

Birding

The Commission did not have much luck with the bird counting event, probably due to the late winter.

Free Classes

It was suggested to the Commission by Mr. Boeske what if we don't charge for classes and offer some as a public service to the community as a free service from the commission? Chairman Van Geyte asked if everyone agreed and all present were in favor.

Canning

Mrs. Boeske has some jars that can be donated for canning class at Stevens Hall proposed for June. Mr. Boeske suggested putting the information on the sign in the town center.

Soap Making

Soap Making will need to be a weekend thing, Saturday and Sunday.

Cheese Making

The Commission would like to follow up on the cheese making workshop Mr. Geary offered to conduct.

Tents & Tables

Mr. Boeske is shopping around for the new tent and table for the Town Fair. Chairman Van Geyte asked if he would email a list of activities.

Foodscaping

Mrs. LeBlanc has begun plans to construct a garden using companion planting which the commission thinks would make a very popular class.

Veteran-Farming

Chairman Van Geyte explained the details of the veteran-farmer campaign, launched by Mr. Geary jointly with Mrs. Beaulieu, to Mrs. Williams and the benefits of it as a therapy for returning veterans with PTSD symptoms. Chairman Van Geyte discussed how when he was in a real estate meeting a board for southern nh, they had put up a cable tv show based in Londonderry and one of the shows was

on the same subject. Mrs. Boeske wondered if this was something they could promote at the Town Fair or link to their webpage. Chairman Van Geyte proposed having the Ag Commission take it one step further and become a catalyst for helping to place people with these farms. Mr. Boeske suggested helping them to raise money to purchase the starter seeds they need. Mrs. LeBlanc spoke to the liability issues that arose when she worked with the Mustang project because the insurance companies would no longer insure them and they lost their sustainability. Mr. Boeske suggested that the foundation the Bealieu's were working with might help with that.

Adjournment

Mr. Boeske motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. LeBlanc seconded his motion, all in favor, so moved. The meeting of the Chester Agricultural Commission was adjourned at 7:50 pm on Tuesday, March 28, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer, Recording Secretary